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Meet the Network

Donald Manasse '77



The tiny principality of Monaco attracts the rich and famous from all over the world. Its climate, geography, and cultural and recreational offerings, as well as its status as a tax haven, are all big draws. The Frommer's travel guide encapsulates it neatly as "a blend of Las Vegas hype and aristocratic glitter."

Donald Manasse '77 has made a home in Monaco for himself and for the Donald Manasse Law Offices, a full-service firm that handles all legal matters including litigation, banking, real estate, finance, intellectual property, tax, and mergers and acquisitions. "Many international business deals have a Monaco aspect and that's where we can be helpful," Mr. Manasse says.

Mr. Manasse is admitted to the French bar, and maintains a second office in nearby Nice, but is not admitted to the Monaco bar. He has taken on a number of high-profile private client cases, including representing cycling champion Lance Armstrong in several defamation lawsuits brought in France. His firm also provided pro bono representation for Ted Maher, the nurse who was convicted of setting a fire in 1999 that killed his employer, billionaire Edmond Safra, in Safra's Monaco penthouse apartment.

Born and raised in Milan, Italy, Mr. Manasse is the son of a German father and American mother who met and married in New York and later settled in Europe. Despite his overseas upbringing, Mr. Manasse's English is American-inflected and almost without accent; he explains that he spoke English with his parents at home.

Mr. Manasse attended undergraduate and graduate school, as well as law school, in the United States. He received a master's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri.

Why law instead of a career in journalism? "It was the Watergate era, and everybody wanted to be Woodward and Bernstein," he remembers. "A lot of people were leaving journalism to become lawyers."

In law school, Mr. Manasse made a number of friends with whom he still keeps in touch. Among them are Jean Oliver '78, Joel Post '77, and Christina Storm '77, the founder of Lawyers Without Borders, the international pro bono legal services organization. He speaks highly of several of his professors, especially the late Joseph Koffler, the renowned teacher of Torts. "Anybody who had him was permanently marked by him," says Mr. Manasse, adding that Professor Koffler "shaped" him as a lawyer. Other professors he remembers fondly include James Simon and Robert Blecker, both current and longtime members of the full-time faculty.

Mr. Manasse met his first wife, Kathryn Kluver '77, at New York Law School. After graduation and the bar exam, they planned to move back to Milan, Mr. Manasse's hometown; but job opportunities in Monaco intervened for both of them. Kluver died in 1994. Their elder son attended law school in Australia, but currently lives in Brooklyn and took the New York State bar exam in July. Mr. Manasse's second wife, Dilla, a native of England, works with him in his firm; they have two young sons.

A yacht-racing enthusiast, Mr. Manasse has participated in national and international regattas, and has raced with his Monaco yacht club in New York Harbor. He was selected in 2000 as a member of the arbitration panel for the 31st America's Cup Regatta in Auckland, New Zealand, which culminated in 2003.

Did you know?

New York Law School students achieved a record pass rate of 90.2% for first-time takers on the July 2007 New York State Bar Exam.

New York Law School Heritage

Meet David T. Wilentz, Class of 1917

David T. Wilentz, the New Jersey Attorney General who in 1935 successfully prosecuted Bruno Richard Hauptmann in the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, graduated from New York Law School in the Class of 1917.

Mr. Wilentz served as State Attorney General from 1934 to 1944. He later became one of the state's most powerful Democratic politicians and founded Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer P.A., today one of New Jersey's largest and best-known law firms.

After taking on the prosecutor's role—and his first criminal trial—in the Lindbergh case, Mr. Wilentz suddenly found himself a subject of worldwide attention. The sensational case ended in a six-week trial in Flemington, New Jersey, that received global publicity. A short, wiry man, Mr. Wilentz was a sharp dresser with an equally sharp, satirical tongue, and reporters flocked around him at every possible opportunity.

He presented the circumstantial evidence against Hauptmann effectively, and the jury returned a guilty verdict. After appeals and continued controversy, including intervention by Governor Harold G. Hoffman, Hauptmann was executed on April 3, 1936.

In the wake of the trial, Mr. Wilentz's influence increased within New Jersey's Democratic Party. He helped found the National Democratic Club of New Jersey with Mayor John V. Kenny of Jersey City, who defeated the legendary Frank Hague, formerly the state's undisputed political boss. Later, Mr. Wilentz became a member of the Democratic National Committee and a power to be reckoned with in selecting presidential and vice-presidential candidates. In New Jersey, he was a close advisor to each Democratic governor.

Mr. Wilentz was born in Latvia in 1894. The next year his parents brought him to the United States, where they settled in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Upon graduating from high school, he got a job with the *Perth Amboy Evening News*, hoping to become sports editor one day. The job was held by Harold Hoffman, who later became governor; when Hoffman quit, Mr. Wilentz succeeded him.

He commuted to Manhattan to attend evening classes at New York Law School. He served in the Army in World War I, rising from private to the rank of lieutenant. After the war, he established the law practice in Perth Amboy that would eventually grow into Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer.

He was appointed City Attorney of Perth Amboy in 1928 and, in the same year, became Chairman of the Middlesex County Democratic Party. On February 5, 1934, Mr. Wilentz was appointed New Jersey Attorney General by Governor A. Harry Moore.

Mr. Wilentz died on July 6, 1988 at age 93. He had continued to put in time at his law firm up to the day before his death. One of his sons, Robert N. Wilentz, was Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court for 17 years, from 1979 to 1996.

Mr. Wilentz's daughter, Norma, married Leon Hess, the Chairman and CEO of the Hess Corporation petroleum company and longtime owner of the New York Jets football team. To this day, Hess Corporation is one of Wilentz, Goldman and Spitzer's biggest and longest-running clients. Marlene Hess, daughter of Norma and Leon, is married to James D. Zirin, a member of New York Law School's Board of Trustees.

Alumni Corner

New York Law School kicked off its Capital Campaign with a gala event, *Breaking New Ground. Again.* on December 13, 2007, at the World Financial Center's Winter Garden. How much do you know about other milestone events in New York Law School's history?

1. Who was the first female graduate of New York Law School, and what year did she graduate?
2. What year did the Law School receive accreditation from the American Bar Association?
3. What was the Law School's first endowed professorship, and what year was it established? (Extra Credit: Who currently holds this professorship?)
4. What was the Law School's first academic center, and when was it created?
5. The Mendik Library building was sold in summer 2006 as part of the larger plan to expand the Law School and construct its new building. Who were the buyers, and what were the proceeds realized by the School?

To take this quiz and see the answers, please visit the Alumni & Friends page on the New York Law School Web site, www.nyls.edu.

Alumni in Brief

Patrick J. Foley '61



Patrick J. Foley '61 was a history major in college, and he will tell you that history is still his “avocation.” He’s being modest. He is currently working his way through an unabridged eight-volume set of Edward Gibbon’s eighteenth-century classic *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*—for the third time.

“History is a window into the past that also gives you a better perspective on the present,” he says. Reading the work, he believes he has found parallels between the trajectories of the American “empire” and that of the Romans. “We’re a microcosm [of the Roman Empire],” he says.

Mr. Foley’s interest in history is broad; but his knowledge of the American Civil War seems extremely detailed. This alumnus with a penchant for telling stories tells a good one about representing his employer, American International Group, Inc. (AIG), in a state insurance hearing in Alabama 40 years ago.

“The hearing officer’s last name was Easterwood,” he says. “During a break in the hearing, I asked him if he was by any chance related to a Colonel Easterwood who served in the Fourth Alabama regiment that fought at First Manassas and Second Manassas [also known as the First and Second Battles of Bull Run]. The guy’s jaw drops and he says, ‘That was my great-great-grandfather.’” This exchange helped smooth the way toward an agreement between AIG and the state of Alabama.

AIG, the leading international insurance organization, was Mr. Foley’s home for most of his career. After being hired as Counsel, he spent 32 years with the company, culminating in his retirement in 1995 as Vice President and Associate General

Counsel. Mr. Foley was also General Counsel of AIG’s domestic insurance companies. Part of his incentive to stay with the company for so long was the opportunity to work with Maurice R. “Hank” Greenberg ’50, AIG’s former Chairman and CEO and himself a New York Law School graduate; Mr. Foley describes this experience as “exhilarating.”

Although retired, Mr. Foley continued as a consultant to AIG for ten years following his move to Florida. He is still a director of three of AIG’s subsidiary insurance companies. He also keeps busy as a partner in a real estate development venture involving 58 acres in Florida’s Brevard County.

Mr. Foley, a Director Emeritus of the Alumni Association, attended the Law School as an evening student while working for Atlantic Mutual Insurance Company. Several faculty members made strong impressions on him, including Adjunct Professor Joseph T. Arenson, who taught Wills, Trusts, and Estates at the Law School for more than 40 years.

Another memorable professor was Max Reich, who taught Civil Procedure and Evidence. “He was probably the best teacher there,” says Mr. Foley. “He didn’t use a textbook. He worked from advance sheets—cases that had been decided within the past year by the Court of Appeals. So we were studying current, actual cases almost as soon as they were decided.”

Mr. Foley has nothing but praise for the School’s current direction. “The dean has done an outstanding job getting the new building under way and recruiting a very high caliber of students,” he says. As the benefactor of the Patrick J. Foley ’61 Scholarship, which assists Evening Division students working in the insurance industry, he has had contact with several student recipients of the scholarship. “They’re bright kids,” he says.

“History is a window into the past that also gives you a better perspective on the present,” he says.

ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

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For Alumni

SAVE THESE DATES

- **February 21 | 12:30 p.m.–2:00 p.m.**
Spotlight Luncheon
Wellington Conference Center
- **February 21 | 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.**
Harlan Reception
- **February 27 | 12:15 p.m.–2:00 p.m.**
Fort Lauderdale CLE* and Luncheon for Alumni and Friends
- **February 27 | 5:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.**
Miami CLE* and Reception for Alumni and Friends
- **February 28 | 12:15 p.m.–2:00 p.m.**
Boca Raton CLE* and Luncheon for Alumni and Friends
- **February 28 | 5:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.**
Palm Beach CLE* and Reception for Alumni and Friends
- **March 3 | 12:15 p.m.–2:00 p.m.**
Washington, D.C. Luncheon for Alumni and Friends

* Featuring Professor William P. LaPiana on "Earning Ethically and Planning Wisely."

Please visit www.nyls.edu/alumni for more information.

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